



On December 20, State Health Commissioner Judith A. Monroe, M.D., impressed upon a crowd of local wellness leaders in Muncie the importance of forging together in the fight against obesity.

Tuesday's meeting at Ball Memorial Hospital, the second of 10 regional meetings throughout the state, focused on the implementation of INShape Indiana in the local community. It was a follow-up to the "Obesity Prevention Summit" held October 27.

"We know that there are a lot of local initiatives, and we know that people want to take ownership of their initiative," Dr. Monroe said. "We hope that INShape Indiana will serve as a clearinghouse, where all these programs will be linked."

Dr. Monroe challenged public health officials to tackle the issue of obesity at the local level by developing or strengthening county coalitions and reaching out to other disciplines such as colleges/universities, media, worksites, government, food/beverage industry, health care providers, schools, and families.

"Everyone has the opportunity to step up to the plate and be a leader," Dr. Monroe said.

Those in attendance expressed agreement with Dr. Monroe, and left the meeting saying they were ready to take action in their communities.

No county-wide program in Delaware County tackles obesity, but "after attending today's talk, we'll be looking into that," said Bob Jones, the Delaware County Health Department Administrator.